

Tijuana River Valley



LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM LAND USE PLAN

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The following amendments have been incorporated into this March 2007 posting of this Plan:

Amendment	Date Approved by Planning Commission	Resolution Number	Date Adopted by City Council	Resolution Number
Tijuana River Valley Plan approved			December 8, 1976	R-217246
Tijuana River Valley Plan revised and submitted to the California Coastal Commission for certification as a Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan			August 4, 1998	R-290601
Amended the Tijuana River Valley Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan as modified by the California Coastal Commission			June 1, 1999	R-291733

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INTRODUCTION

The Tijuana River Valley planning area, including Border Highlands, is located within the California Coastal Zone and, as such, is subject to the regulations of the California Coastal Act of 1976. Provision of this Local Coastal Addendum is a requirement of that Act. The planning area is bounded on the south by the Mexican border, on the west by the city of Imperial Beach including Border Field State Park, on the north by the Imperial Beach Naval Air Station (helicopter operation) and the Otay Nestor residential area, and on the east by residential and commercial areas of San Ysidro.

BACKGROUND

On October 30, 1973, the City Council instructed the Planning Commission to prepare a comprehensive plan for the Tijuana River Valley. The Council desired a plan that provided optimum balance between conservation and development in the Valley. The plan was to provide a socio-economic base for future development of the Valley, and preserve the integrity of two major environmental resources existing in the Valley, the Tijuana River Estuary, and the Valley's agricultural lands.

On December 8, 1976, the City Council adopted the Tijuana River Valley Plan (Plan) by Resolution No. 217246. With the approval of this Plan, the Border Area Plan was updated and the Progress Guide and General Plan (General Plan) was also amended.

In September 1979, the California State Coastal Commission certified the Tijuana River Valley Plan, Local Coastal Program Addendum (the City of San Diego, 1979), as the Local Coastal Plan for that area. During the Tijuana River Valley Plan certification hearings by the Coastal Commission, a portion of the plan area known as the Border Highlands, was not certified by the state and was identified for further study. The Coastal Commission recognized that the Border Highlands area represented a major sand and gravel resource, although the Tijuana River Valley Plan designated the area east of Smuggler's Gulch as "Commercial Recreation" and the area west of Smuggler's Gulch for inclusion into the nearby Border Field State Park. The Department of Park and Recreation had concluded that due to limited funding sources it was unable to carry out plans for expansion of the park into those areas of the Border Highlands that contain sand and gravel resources, even though the portion west of Smuggler's Gulch was shown as "Proposed Border Field Park" in the Tijuana River Valley Plan (State of California, 1980).

In order to resolve these apparent conflicts, the Coastal Commission recommended that a Precise Land Use Plan be developed for the Border Highlands/Spooner Mesa area, that would specifically consider the issues and phased development of sand and gravel extraction wherever this resource exists in the study area, and would provide for minimal visual and environmental impacts of such development, including consideration of grading, road and utility installations, geologic hazards, traffic generation, habitat protection, and archaeological resource protection. At the same time, the Coastal Commission certified the commercial recreation and a buffer area designation to the park as the ultimate uses of the land. The Border Highlands Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan was adopted by the City

Council on April 13, 1982, and certified by the California Coastal Commission on August 27, 1982.

The Tijuana River Valley Plan was amended in 1990, to recognize the National Estuarine Sanctuary (Research Reserve) and the county's Tijuana River Regional Park. The Tijuana Estuary, in connection with the Tijuana River Valley, comprises one of the largest and most important wetland systems in San Diego County.

The county of San Diego is developing a regional park in the Tijuana River Valley that will include a mixture of recreational opportunities, sustainable agriculture, and native habitats. Most of the properties that were designated for sand and gravel extraction in the Border Highlands Plan have been, or are in the process of being, purchased for agriculture, open space and park uses. The entire park area and the Management Framework (1989) are considered compatible with the Multiple Species Conservation Open Space and Other Community Open Space/Agriculture land use designations and recommendations of this Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.

TIJUANA RIVER VALLEY LAND USE PLAN

This Plan effectively replaces the previous Tijuana River Valley Plan and Local Coastal Program Addendum which was adopted in March 1977, and subsequently amended. It also replaces the 1982 Border Highlands Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.

The Land Use Plan is significantly different from the previous planning documents in that it shifts the primary land use emphasis to preservation, enhancement and restoration of the natural features of the area, while still allowing for limited recreational and agricultural use. The previous plan provided for a wider mix of uses including commercial recreation, such as camping, hotels and retail establishments, and placed greater emphasis on housing and agriculture.

As the rare and unique natural qualities of the Tijuana River Valley have become more widely understood and appreciated during the past two decades, a consensus developed in the City, county and among state and federal wildlife agencies that a majority of this planning area should be devoted primarily to long-term preservation of natural resource values. The county of San Diego is developing a regional park in the Tijuana River Valley and has been actively pursuing acquisition of property for park development purposes. The Land Use Plan is consistent with the county's Management Framework (1989) and the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan which was adopted on March 18, 1997.

With the adoption of the MSCP Subarea Plan by the San Diego City Council in March 1997, the LCP goals of the Tijuana River Valley Plan regarding housing, commercial recreation use and long-term agricultural use have been reevaluated and revised to correspond to the new vision for the Tijuana River Valley as primarily a regional park and natural estuary. The proposed land uses in the Tijuana River Valley have now been changed to focus almost exclusively on long-term restoration, enhancement and preservation of the natural ecosystem in the area. The emphasis on agriculture has been decreased, with less than 12 percent of the acreage in the planning area designated for continued agricultural use. Commercial recreation and urban residential land use designations have been eliminated from the Plan.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Tijuana River Valley is a broad natural floodplain containing a variety of wetland and riparian areas. This valley is a small portion of the Tijuana River's 1,700 square miles of watershed. The watershed area includes portions of south San Diego County and northern Baja California, Mexico. Near the coast is the most extensive salt marsh in southern California, which is preserved within the Tijuana River National Estuarine Sanctuary (described below). Further inland the river is vegetated with riparian habitat. The valley is bounded on the south by high mesas and deep canyons covered by chaparral, sage scrub and grasslands. The valley floodplain currently contains a mixture of agricultural fields, equestrian facilities, rural housing, riparian woodland and disturbed habitats. Sand mining and agriculture, which were significant activities in the past, have declined. Agriculture has been in decline for many years due in part to salt intrusion into the water table that, in turn, reduced the soil productivity in this area. Other human-caused disturbances to the natural ecosystem include illegal dumping, off road vehicle riding and water pollution, primarily from locations upstream in Mexico.

UNITED STATES BORDER PATROL OPERATIONS

The Border Patrol is a federal law enforcement agency which is responsible for the interdiction of smuggling, drug traffic and persons attempting to enter the United States illegally. Because of the relative isolation of the area, this portion of the International Border with Mexico has long been an important area for U.S. Border Patrol operations. The entire area is patrolled by U.S. Border Patrol agents working from the San Ysidro office. Monument Road is the main access road utilized by the Border Patrol. The Border Patrol also utilizes off-road vehicles and horses to patrol the international boundary. The mission and responsibilities of the Border Patrol will not be preempted by the goals, policies and recommendations of this Plan.

TIJUANA RIVER NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE (TRNERR)

The Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve encompasses approximately 2,531 acres of tidally flushed wetlands, riparian and upland habitats extending immediately north of the U.S. and Mexico border. The Research Reserve, while located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the cities of Imperial Beach and San Diego, the lands are owned and managed cooperatively by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the City of San Diego, the county of San Diego and the U.S. Navy. The western boundary of the Sanctuary follows the Pacific Ocean shoreline from the southern tip of Seacoast Drive to the U.S.-Mexico border. It is further bounded by Seacoast Drive, Imperial Beach Boulevard and the Navy Outlying Landing Field on the north, Saturn Boulevard on the east and Monument Road and the U.S.-Mexico border on the south.

The site was established in 1982 as a National Estuarine Sanctuary in accordance with Section 315 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (later revised from Sanctuary to Research Reserve). National estuarine sanctuaries are areas set aside for long-term research,

education and interpretation through a cooperative federal-state effort. A primary aim of these research and education projects is to provide information to the state that is useful for decision-making concerning the development or protection of its coast and associated resources.

The Research Reserve represents one of the few remaining examples of relatively undisturbed, tidally flushed coastal wetlands in southern California. The estuary provides productive marsh habitat for invertebrates, fish and birds, including endangered species such as the light-footed clapper rail and the California least tern. An endangered plant, the salt marsh bird's beak, also grows in the area.

The Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan governs planned activities and development within the estuary boundaries to ensure its preservation as a research and interpretive resource.

BORDER FIELD STATE PARK

Border Field State Park is a 418-acre parcel at the southern end of the Tijuana River National Estuarine Sanctuary, and is owned by the state of California and is administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The park was established to preserve and protect the unique resources located in the floodplain and adjacent uplands at the mouth of the Tijuana River. State policy requires that management of the park emphasizes: (1) the restoration of those values where they have been impaired by the activities of modern man; and (2) their perpetuation in relationship to ongoing recreational and interpretive uses. Developments or visitor uses that pose a threat to significant park resources, particularly rare or endangered species, are prohibited. The Resource Management and General Development Plan for the Border Field State Park sets forth general guidelines and development proposals for the area.

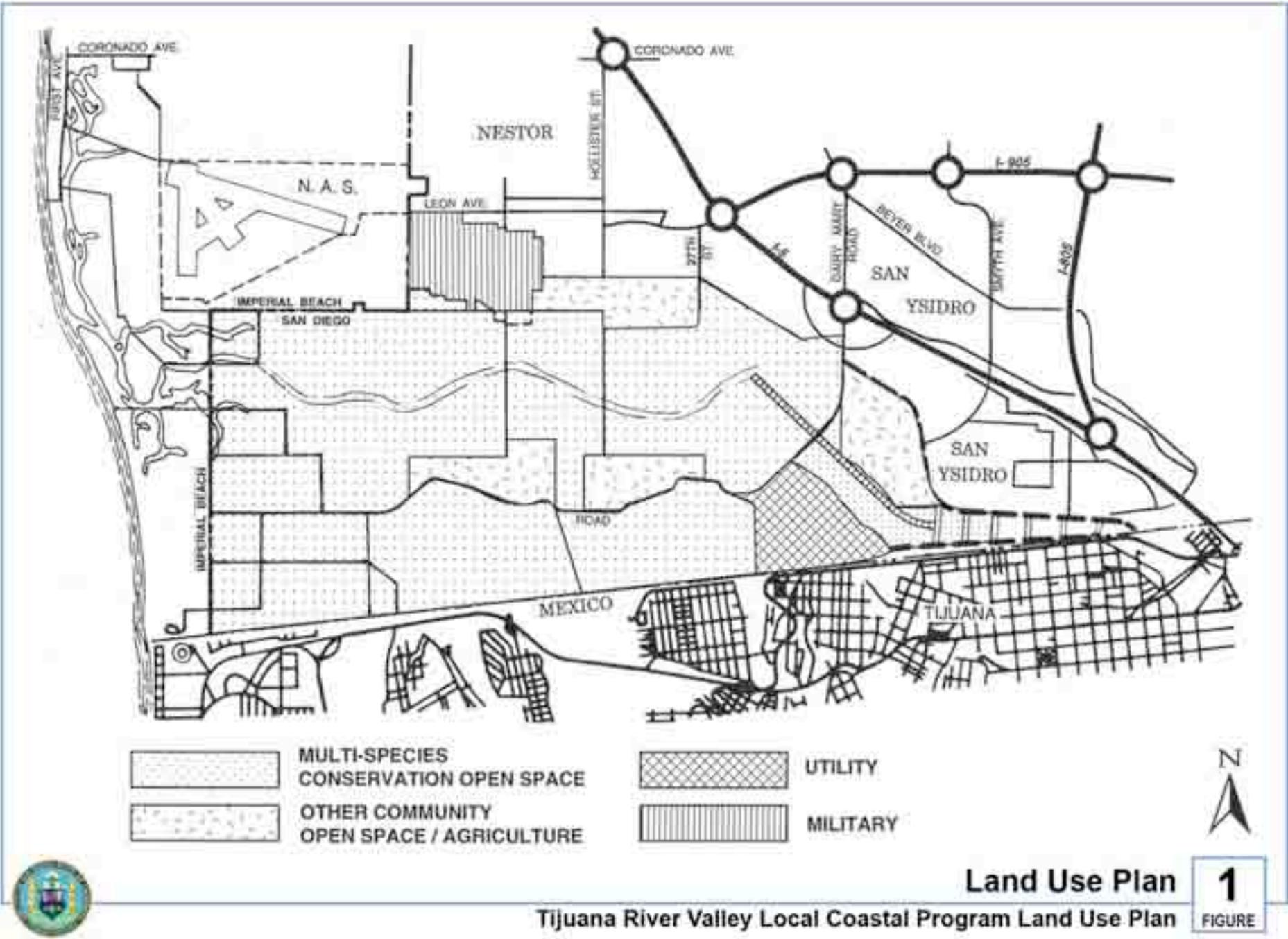
TIJUANA RIVER REGIONAL PARK

On June 8, 1988, California voters endorsed the passage of Proposition 70 (Wildlife, Coastal and Parkland Conservation Bond Act). The act allocated ten million dollars specifically for the acquisition of park and wildlife lands within the Tijuana River Valley. Utilizing those funds, the San Diego County Park and Recreation Department is developing a regional park in the Tijuana River Valley that will preserve, enhance and restore sensitive habitat in the Tijuana River Valley as a regional park. In addition to sensitive habitat, the park will include a mixture of recreational opportunities—including equestrian facilities, riding and hiking trails, as well as sustainable agriculture. Development of the park area is governed by the county's Management Framework (1989), which contains the conceptual framework for design and management of the park. The county is in the process of updating its Management Framework which will further facilitate development of the Regional Park and implementation of this Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.

OVERALL GOALS

The 1977 Tijuana River Valley Plan contained a number of overall goals that were established to guide private land use development and governmental actions in the Tijuana River Valley, including the Border Highlands area. The following goals are still applicable to the planning area, and thus are included in this Local Coastal Program - Land Use Plan:

- To provide flood protection commensurate with economic cost benefits for urbanized portions of south San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico, and to provide benefits to satisfy the International Treaty with Mexico.
- To fulfill the international obligations between the United States and Mexico to complete the flood channel to the boundary and prevent backwater flooding from the United States into Mexico.
- To protect, preserve and restore natural coastal resources.
- To conserve and enhance agricultural productivity where appropriate, consistent with the priority for long-term restoration, enhancement and preservation of the natural ecosystem of the Tijuana River Valley.
- To provide visual and passive relief from continuous urbanization for the residents in the vicinity of the Tijuana River Valley.
- To provide necessary public health and safety facilities and services, including Border Patrol operations, within the public lands portion of the planning area in keeping with the passive use of the natural environment.



DESIGNATED LAND USES

A majority of the planning area (2,970 acres) is designated for long-term natural open space use (Multiple Species Conservation Open Space.) A smaller area (434 acres) is designated for Other Community Open Space/Agricultural use. The only other land use designations are Military (a 177-acre area of Navy land (Imperial Beach Naval Air Station) at the northern edge of the planning area) and Utility. The Utility designation is applied to the 189-acre site of the International Wastewater Treatment Plant and the South Bay Water Reclamation and Wastewater Treatment Plants. These facilities are located in the eastern portion of the planning area. The land use plan is depicted on **Figure 1**.

LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM LAND USE PLAN

MULTIPLE SPECIES CONSERVATION OPEN SPACE

This designation represents that area in the Tijuana River Valley which has been included in the City of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan's Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), developed in cooperation with state and federal wildlife agencies, property owners, developers and environmental groups. The Multi-Habitat Planning Area delineates core biological resource areas and corridors targeted for conservation. Within the MHPA limited development may occur. The MHPA incorporates the 25-year floodplain within the City's jurisdiction and much of the 100-year floodplain in the valley. The MHPA further includes the mesa and canyon areas on the south side of the floodplain known as Border Highlands and the Dairy Mart Ponds, some of which are also in the San Ysidro Community Plan area.

The entire Tijuana River Regional Park area and the Management Framework governing its development, are considered to be generally compatible with the MHPA even though many of the proposed uses are not specifically habitat-related. Those portions of the Tijuana River Valley not included in the MHPA will be considered for more active open space uses, such as agriculture and active recreation, as detailed in the Other Community Open Space and Agriculture element. Areas within the 25-year floodplain which are currently leased for agriculture are expected to remain in these uses for at least 20 years. In the long term, these areas will be evaluated for restoration consistent with the county's Management Framework. Before any existing agricultural lands area considered for conversion to non-agricultural uses, an analysis shall be conducted to determine if any prime agricultural lands exist and a determination made that continuation of such agricultural uses is infeasible. A feasibility analysis is not required for lands acquired by a public agency and managed by the public agency or its designee for park or habitat conservation purposes.

Goals and Objectives

- Restore the Tijuana River Valley to a broad natural floodplain containing riparian and wetland habitats, bounded by high mesas and deep canyons with chaparral, sage scrub, and grasslands.
- Intermix the natural habitat with compatible agricultural, recreational and water quality improvement activities, all functioning in concert to maintain and enhance natural ecosystems and the local quality of life and environment.
- Maintain existing reserve (estuary) and park uses.
- Maintain a buffer around all wetland areas, while accommodating approved trail plans.
- Maintain existing agricultural uses on Spooner's Mesa, with a long-term goal of phased restoration to coastal sage scrub, maritime succulent scrub or native grasslands. If Spooner's Mesa is developed with active uses, landscape developed areas adjacent to the preserve with local native species only.

- Maintain agricultural and existing park uses on county-owned lands, with a long-term goal of restoration to native vegetation where continued agricultural use is infeasible and where it is determined to be consistent with Sections 30241 and 30242 of the Coastal Act.
- Retain and enhance, where possible, existing riparian habitat along the Tijuana River.
- Limit disturbance of natural open space areas to horseback riding, mountain biking and hiking trails and passive recreational uses such as photography, bird watching and nature study that are consistent with preservation of natural resources.
- Contain active recreational uses planned for the valley in areas determined appropriate for such activities by the county's Regional Park Plan and consistent with the Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.

Specific Recommendations

The following recommendations are made related to specific uses which may occur within the MHPA to ensure that the goals and objectives of the Multiple Species Conservation Open Space designation are attained.

A. Multiple Species Conservation

- Ensure that adequate amounts of appropriate habitats are maintained for covered species (e.g., the Northern harrier and Mountain plover) dependent on the valley's habitat types including grasslands and agricultural fields.
- The MHPA lands adjacent to the residential areas on the northern side of the valley provide a transition to the more sensitive central portions of the valley from lighting, urban runoff, noise and other potential disturbance. Place naturalized detention basins where urban runoff the northern edge to control access and pet predation of sensitive species.

B. Recreation

- Limit disturbance of natural open space areas to horseback riding, mountain biking and hiking trails and passive recreational uses such as photography, bird watching and nature study that are consistent with preservation of natural resources.
- Contain active recreational uses planned for the valley in areas determined appropriate for such activities by the county's Regional Park Plan and consistent with this Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.
- Consider additional recreational uses, as appropriate, along the edge of an open space area or in the relatively limited open space areas that do not contain sensitive habitat and wildlife. In these areas, uses such as picnic tables, benches, and small scale horticultural and gardening uses could be permitted on a case-by-case basis. Such uses should not involve construction of permanent structures or paved areas. In those natural open space areas which are part of large regional parks, the park master plan

should designate the appropriate areas for various types and intensities of recreational use.

- All new and proposed parking lots and developed areas in and adjacent to the preserve must not drain directly into the MHPA. All developed and paved areas must prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials, and other elements that might degrade or harm the natural environment or ecosystem processes within the MHPA. This can be accomplished using a variety of methods including natural detention basins, grass swales or mechanical trapping devices. These systems should be maintained approximately once a year or as often as needed, to ensure proper functioning. Maintenance should include dredging out sediments if needed, removing exotic plant materials, and adding chemical-neutralizing compounds (e.g. clay compounds) when necessary and appropriate.

C. Flood Control

- Flood Control should generally be limited to existing agreements with wildlife agencies and where no other method for protecting existing structures in the floodplain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety and unless demonstrated to be needed based on a cost benefit analysis and pursuant to a restoration plan. Floodplains within the MHPA, and upstream from the MHPA if feasible, should remain in a natural condition and configuration in order to allow for the ecological, geological, hydrological, and other natural processes to remain or be restored.
- No berming, channelization, or man-made constraints or barriers to creek, tributary, or river flows should be allowed in any floodplain within the MHPA unless reviewed by all appropriate agencies, and adequately mitigated. Review must include impacts to upstream and downstream habitats, flood flow volumes, velocities and configurations, water availability, and changes to the water table level. Channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of rivers and streams shall incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible, and be limited to (1) necessary water supply projects, (2) flood control projects where no other method for protecting existing structures in the floodplain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety or to protect existing development, or (3) developments where the primary function is the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat.
- No riprap, concrete, or other unnatural material shall be used to stabilize river, creek, tributary, and channel banks within the MHPA. River, stream, and channel banks shall be natural, and stabilized where necessary with willows and other appropriate native plantings. Rock gabions may be used where necessary to dissipate flows and should incorporate design features to ensure wildlife movement.

D. Mining, Extraction, and Processing Facilities

Mining operations include mineral extraction, processing and other related mining activities (e.g. asphaltic processing). Currently permitted mining operations that have approved restoration plans may continue operating in the MHPA.

- New or expanded mining operations on lands conserved as part of the MHPA are incompatible with Local Coastal Program goals for covered species and their habitats unless otherwise agreed to by the wildlife agencies at the time the parcel is conserved. New operations are permitted in the MHPA if: 1) impacts have been assessed and conditions incorporated to mitigate biological and restore mined areas; 2) adverse impacts to covered species in the MHPA have been mitigated consistent with the Subarea Plan; and 3) requirements of other City land use policies and regulations (e.g. Adjacency Guidelines, Conditional Use Permit, Coastal Development Permit, Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance) have been satisfied.
- Existing and any newly permitted operations adjacent to or within the MHPA shall meet noise, air quality and water quality regulation requirements, as identified in the conditions of any existing or new permit, in order to adequately protect adjacent preserved areas and covered species. Such facilities shall also be appropriately restored upon cessation of mining activities.
- All mining and other related activities must be consistent with the objectives, guidelines and recommendations in all land use policy documents and zoning regulations adopted by the City of San Diego and certified by the California Coastal Commission, as well as with the State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975.
- Monitor any sand removal activities for noise impacts to surrounding sensitive habitats, and all new sediment removal or mining operations proposed in proximity to the MHPA, or changes in existing operations, must include noise reduction methods that take into consideration the breeding and nesting seasons of sensitive bird species.
- All existing and future mined lands adjacent to or within the MHPA shall be reclaimed pursuant to SMARA. Ponds are considered compatible uses where they provide native wildlife and wetland habitats and do not conflict with conservation goals of this Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.
- Any permitted mining activity including reclamation of sand must consider changes and impacts to water quality, water table level, fluvial hydrology, flooding, and wetlands and habitats upstream and downstream, and provide adequate mitigation.

E. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas

- The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to minor incidental public service projects, restoration purposes, nature study and mineral extraction.

- A wetland buffer shall be maintained around all wetlands as necessary and as appropriate to protect the functions and values of the wetland. Wetland buffers should be provided at a minimum 100-foot distance adjacent to all identified wetlands and a 50-foot distance adjacent to riparian areas. The width of the buffer may be either increased or decreased as determined on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game, taking into consideration the type and size of development, the sensitivity of the wetland resources to detrimental edge effects, natural features, such as topography, and the function and values of the wetland. Developments permitted in wetland buffer areas shall be limited to access paths, passive recreational areas, fences and similar improvements necessary to protect the wetland, and such improvements shall be restricted to the upper/inland half of the buffer zone.
- Environmentally sensitive habitat areas within and adjacent to the estuary should be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only those uses dependant on the resources should be allowed within such areas.
- Development shall be located so as not to contribute to increased sediment loading of the wetland, cause disturbance to fish and wildlife, or otherwise impair the functional capacity of the wetland.

F. Hillside Development/Visual Resources

- Within the Coastal Zone, development shall be restricted in steep hillsides which have been identified as containing sensitive biological resources or significant scenic amenities or hazards to development (including major undeveloped sites with high erodibility characteristics). Steep hillsides shall be preserved in their natural state, provided a minimal encroachment into the steep hillsides may be permitted as detailed in the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Regulations, upon the discretionary judgment that there is no feasible alternative siting or design which eliminates or substantially reduces the need for such encroachment, and it is found that the bulk and scale of the proposed structure has been minimized to the greatest extent feasible and such encroachment is necessary for minimum site development and that the maximum contiguous area of sensitive slopes is preserved.
- Encroachment shall constitute any activity which involves grading, construction, placement of structures or materials, paving, removal of vegetation (including clear-cutting for brush management purposes or clearance for fire control), other operations which would render the area incapable of supporting native vegetation or being used as wildlife habitat.

G. Grading/Sediment Control/Water Quality

- Sediment control measures (debris basins, desilting basins or silt traps) shall be installed in conjunction with any new development in which grading is proposed. The prevention and control of runoff of fertilizers, pesticides and other urban pollutants into riparian and floodplain areas should be required.

OTHER COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE AND AGRICULTURE

This designation has been applied to those areas outside of the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), and is intended to protect landforms, provide visually appealing open space and protect biological systems of community importance that are not otherwise included in the Multiple Species Conservation Open Space category.

Goals and Objectives

- Establish an open space system which provides for the preservation of natural resources, the managed production of resources, the provision of outdoor recreation, the protection of public health and safety, and the utilization of the varied terrain and natural drainage systems of the region to guide the form of adjacent urban development.
- Retain premium agriculturally productive lands in agricultural usage.
- Provide a range of opportunities for active and passive recreation in the valley.

Specific Recommendations

A. General

- Land uses, such as recreation and agriculture, that use chemical or generate by-products such as manure, that are potentially toxic or impactive to wildlife, sensitive species, habitat, or water quality, need to incorporate measures to reduce impacts caused by the application and/or drainage of such materials into the MHPA. Such measures should include drainage/detention basins, swales, or holding areas with non-invasive grasses or wetland-type vegetation to filter out the toxic materials. Regular maintenance should be provided. Where applicable, this requirement should be incorporated into leases on publicly-owned property as leases come up for renewal. Fly-breeding nuisance caused by animal manure will be handled in accordance with standards established by San Diego County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control.

B. Other Community Open Space

- Respect the natural environment to the maximum extent possible when installing public and private improvements in designated open space areas.
- Make fullest possible use of multi-purpose planning to expand recreational opportunities, including a variety of compatible recreation activities within a given site; passive recreation combined with cultural resource preservation; and appropriate recreational use of open space lands and wildlife conservation areas and water resources.
- Design parks so as to preserve or enhance the topographic and other natural site characteristics.

- Utilize planting materials native to southern California and landscaping compatible with our climate to reduce maintenance costs.
- Permit more active recreational uses, including camping, athletic fields, and other organized sports activities. Where necessary, incorporate measures to avoid/minimize impacts to biological resources within the MHPA.
- Consider additional recreational uses, as appropriate, along the edge of an open space area or in the relatively limited open space areas that do not contain sensitive habitat and wildlife. In these areas, uses such as picnic tables, benches, and small scale horticultural and gardening uses could be permitted on a case-by-case basis. Such uses should not involve construction of permanent structures or paved areas. In those natural open space areas which are part of large regional parks, the park master plan should designate the appropriate areas for various types and intensities of recreational use.
- All new and proposed parking lots and developed areas in and adjacent to the preserve must not drain directly into the MHPA. All developed and paved areas must prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials, and other elements that might degrade or harm the natural environment or ecosystem processes within the MHPA. This can be accomplished using a variety of methods including natural detention basins, grass swales or mechanical trapping devices. These systems should be maintained approximately once a year or as often as needed, to ensure proper functioning. Maintenance should include dredging out sediments if needed, removing exotic plant materials, and adding chemical-neutralizing compounds (e.g. clay compounds) when necessary and appropriate.

C. Agriculture

- Give priority to open space acquisition that facilitates conservation of important agricultural lands.
- Retain prime productive agricultural lands in permanent agricultural zones.
- Before any existing agricultural lands area considered for conversion to non-agricultural uses, an analysis shall be conducted to determine if any prime agricultural lands exist and a determination made that continuation of such agricultural uses on prime agricultural lands is infeasible. A feasibility analysis is not required for lands acquired by a public agency and managed by the public agency or its designee for park or habitat conservation purposes.

D. Wetlands

- The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to minor incidental public service projects, restoration purposes, nature studies and mineral extraction.

- A wetland buffer shall be maintained around all wetlands as necessary and as appropriate to protect the functions and values of the wetland. Wetland buffers should be provided at a minimum 100-foot distance adjacent to all identified wetlands and a 50-foot distance adjacent to riparian areas. The width of the buffer may be either increased or decreased as determined on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game, taking into consideration the type and size of development, the sensitivity of the wetland resources to detrimental edge effects, natural features, such as topography, the need to provide upland transitional habitat, and the function and values of the wetland. Developments permitted in wetland buffer areas shall be limited to access paths, passive recreational areas, fences and similar improvements necessary to protect the wetland, and such improvements shall be restricted to the upper/inland half of the buffer zone.
- Developments shall be located so as not to contribute to increased sediment loading of the wetland, cause disturbance to fish and wildlife or otherwise impair the functional capacity of the wetland.

UTILITY

This designation is applied to the 189 acres, south of Monument Road, encompassing the site of the International Wastewater Treatment Plant and the South Bay Water Reclamation and Wastewater Treatment Plants.

Goals and Objectives

- To provide adequate public and private utilities to serve the Tijuana River Valley and surrounding communities and region, while respecting the natural characteristics of the area.

Specific Recommendations

- Design all proposed utility lines (e.g., sewer, water, etc.) to avoid or minimize intrusion into the MHPA. These facilities should be routed through developed or developing areas rather than the MHPA, where possible. If no other routing is feasible, then the lines should follow previously existing roads, easements, rights-of-way, and disturbed areas, minimizing habitat fragmentation.
- Minimize environmental impacts when planning, designing, locating and constructing all new development for utilities and facilities within or crossing the MHPA. All such activities must avoid disturbing the habitat of MSCP covered species, and wetlands. If avoidance is infeasible, mitigation will be required.
- Temporary construction areas and roads, staging areas, or permanent access roads must not disturb existing habitat unless determined to be unavoidable. All such activities must occur on existing agricultural lands or in other disturbed areas rather than in habitat. If temporary habitat disturbance is unavoidable, then restoration of, and/or mitigation for, the disturbed area after project completion will be required.

- Construction and maintenance activities in wildlife corridors must avoid disruption of corridor usage. Environmental documents and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs covering such development must clearly specify how this will be achieved, and construction plans must contain all the pertinent information and be readily available to crews in the field. Training of construction crews and field workers must be conducted to ensure that all conditions are met. A responsible party must be specified.
- Ensure appropriate storage of materials (e.g., hazardous or toxic, chemicals, equipment, etc.) per applicable regulations in any areas that may impact the MHPA, especially due to potential leakage.
- Direct lighting of all developed areas adjacent to the MHPA away from the MHPA. Where necessary, development should provide adequate shielding with non-invasive plant materials (preferably native), berming, and/or other methods to protect the MHPA and sensitive species from night lighting.

MILITARY

This land use designation is applied to the 177-acre Imperial Beach Naval Air Station. This federal site is presently not subject to state or City regulations. In the event of base closure, any reuse plans for this site will consider the opportunities and constraints of the adjacent open space land use designations, the City's Multiple Species Conservation Plan and this Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan.

CIRCULATION

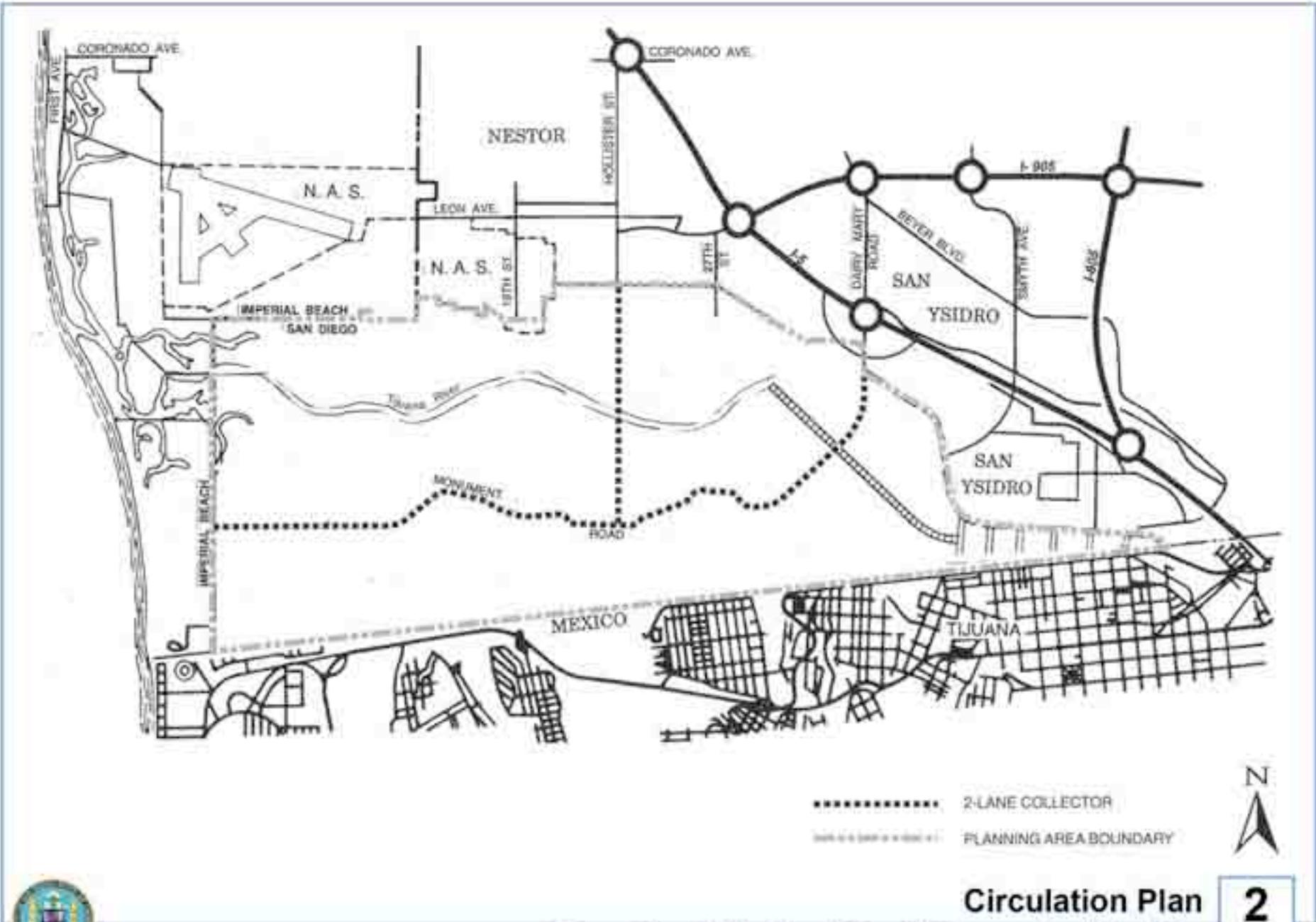
The Tijuana River Valley is served by improved roads and Interstate 5, which borders the northeastern part of the valley. There is only a skeleton network of streets in the valley. The land uses presently do not generate sufficient traffic to require any more than this limited system. The only street classifications that exist in the valley are the freeway and collector streets.

Interstate 5 is intended to carry large volumes for great distances and is a route of international importance. Collector streets, as the name implies, serve to move traffic in local areas and carry it to higher capacity routes. They are also designated to provide direct access to abutting properties.

The collector streets in the area are Monument Road, Dairy Mart Road, Hollister Street and Saturn Boulevard. All other streets are classified as local, and are designed primarily to provide access to adjoining property, with the movement of traffic being given secondary importance.

Goals and Objectives

- To provide a system of circulation including both transit and surface streets to adequately transport people and goods to, from and within the Tijuana River Valley in an efficient, economical and convenient manner in keeping with environmental factors.



Circulation Plan

2
FIGURE

Tijuana River Valley Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan



Specific Recommendations

- Roads in the valley will be limited to those identified in the **Circulation Element** exhibit of this land use plan except as necessary for temporary emergency access. Local streets should not cross the MHPA except where shown on the **Circulation Element** exhibit of this land use plan and needed to access isolated development areas.
- Avoid the development of roads in canyon bottoms whenever feasible. If an alternative location outside the MHPA is not feasible, then the road must be designed to cross the shortest length possible of the MHPA in order to minimize impacts and fragmentation of sensitive species and habitat. If roads cross the MHPA, they should provide for fully functional wildlife movement capability. Bridges are the preferred method of providing for movement, although culverts in selected locations may be acceptable. Fencing, grading and plant cover should be provided where needed to protect and shield animals, and guide them away from roads to appropriate crossings.
- Where possible, new roads within the MHPA should be narrowed from existing design standards to minimize habitat fragmentation and disruption of wildlife movement and breeding areas. Roads must be located in lower quality habitat or disturbed areas to the extent possible.